

Dawson Property
CH-755
Marbury vic.
Private

Circa 1910

The Dawson Property stands directly on the east side of Bicknell Road midway between the villages of Pisgah and Marbury. The site consists of a wood frame foursquare dwelling that was substantially altered in the 1960's by the addition of a brick veneer to the original siding and the construction of wings to the north, south and east elevations. Early 20th century outbuildings include a small stable and dairy, as well as a non-contributing late 20th century garage. The Dawson Property reflects the agricultural and residential development in the northwestern section of Charles County during the early 20th century. The farm is believed to have been established by Cora and Worthy Milstead and originally included 150 acres.

Inventory No. CH-755

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Dawson Property
other	

2. Location

street and number	5280 Bicknell Road	_____	not for publication
city, town	Marbury	20658 _____	vicinity
county	Charles		

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	James and Patricia Dawson				
street and number	PO Box 27			telephone	301-744-6667
city, town	Indian Head	state	MD	zip code	20640

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	30 p. 48
city, town	La Plata	liber	1455 folio 119

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

Category		Ownership		Current Function		Resource Count	
						Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district	<input type="checkbox"/>	public	<input type="checkbox"/>	agriculture		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private	<input type="checkbox"/>	commerce/trade	<u>3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	both	<input type="checkbox"/>	defense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	site			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	domestic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	object			<input type="checkbox"/>	education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	funerary	<u>3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	government		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	health care		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	industry		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	landscape		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	recreation/culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	religion		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	social		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	transportation		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	work in progress		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	unknown		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	vacant/not in use		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	other:		<input type="checkbox"/>
						Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
						0	

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-755

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Dawson Property stands directly on the east side of Bicknell Road midway between the villages of Pisgah and Marbury. The site consists of a dwelling and two outbuildings dating from the early 20th century. The dwelling is a wood frame foursquare structure that was substantially altered in the 1960's with the addition of a brick veneer to the original siding and the construction of wings to the north, south and east elevations. Outbuildings include a small stable and dairy, as well as a non-contributing late 20th century garage.

The 2 1/2 story dwelling measures 28x28 overall with first floor rooms measuring 14 x 14 overall. The pyramidal roof is pierced by dormers on three sides and covered by the original pressed tin roof. Another surviving original feature includes the scrollsawn wood corniceboard adorning the gable and the two-tier boxed cornice. The front elevation includes a three part window in the gable above a two pair of symmetrical 1/1 windows on the on the front elevation. The first floor is sheltered by a hipped roof porch supported by large square tapered wood posts. A pair of windows occupies the northernmost bay while the entranceway, consisting of an original wood doorway with sidelight and transom occupies the southern bay. The side elevations have been altered as a result of later additions. Significant changes have also taken place in the interior during the 1960's renovation. Most recently, the dining room, with original pressed-tin ceiling, along with the north one-story wing has been converted into an in-laws suite.

The outbuildings include a late 19th-early 20th century stable and a slightly later dairy which has been enlarged several times since it's original construction. The barns are located next to a lane, behind the dwelling. Both barns include all or portions of their original board and batten siding. Each also included lofts to store feed and fodder.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-755

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates circa 1910

Architect/Builder unknown

Construction dates circa 1910

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Dawson Property reflects the agricultural and residential development in the northwestern section of Charles County during the early 20th century. The farm is believed to have been established by Cora and Worthy Milstead and originally included 150 acres. Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. While planters continued to rely heavily on tobacco cultivation, slave labor was replaced with various systems of tenancy or wage labor. Due to dwindling profits, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition, Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. This lack of capital made it difficult for farmers to branch out into other agricultural and commercial pursuits.

Adding to the economic stagnation following the war, was the unpredictability of tobacco prices. Through the latter part of the 19th century, tobacco values remained depressed, insuring that the small tenant farmers and share-croppers struggled. tobacco production fell precipitously following the Civil War. In 1870, Charles County's crop fell in volume to less than half of what it was ten years earlier, and in price from 8 cents per pound in 1869 to just five cents per pound in 1889. By 1909 prices had still not recovered, rising only to 7 cents.

The post-war period also marked the end of large farms. In 1870 there were 545 farms in Charles County. By 1900 that number had more than tripled at 1900 farms. Farm size continually decreased as large farms, containing over 500 acres, were divided. The most dramatic increase was seen in the number of farms under fifty acres, which more than doubled between 361 farms in 1880 and 728 farms in 1920.

The turmoil of the Reconstruction era continued in Charles County well into the 20th century. Because of these economic difficulties, population growth in the county generally stagnated between 1860 and 1920. The economic decline, and later, stagnation that followed the Civil War is evident in the census figures between 1860 and 1890. By 1890, the number of county residents was nearly 1,400 less than in 1860. With little industry or profitable agriculture drawing new residents to the county during the post-Civil War era, many young Charles County residents moved away as they reached maturity.

The naval ordnance manufacturing plant, built at Mattawoman Neck in 1890, was the single most important and long-lasting industry established in Charles County during this period. The Naval Proving Ground was moved to Mattawoman Neck when transportation from the former Proving Ground at Annapolis to the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, DC became too dangerous. Nearly nine hundred acres of land was purchased for the proving ground, and later supplemented by an additional ten thousand acres on Stump Neck. In 1898, the Naval Powder Factory was constructed, and the first powder was manufactured in 1900. During World War I, transportation to and from the factory was improved by the construction of a railroad spur from White Plains in 1917.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-755

Name Dawson Property

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Although the Proving Ground was moved to Dahlgren, Virginia in 1921, the plant continued to operate and began tests that would lead to the development of jet propulsion and rocket testing at the naval station. From the beginning, the plant and proving ground provided an important and stable center of employment for the county. During the war years, the plant expanded, requiring more laborers. The town of Indian Head grew up just opposite the gates of the installation, while the village of Marbury developed south of Mattawoman Creek.

Evidence of the impact on the proving ground to the adjoining region can be found in census records from 1890-1920 which reveal that the election district of Pomonkey, including Indian Head and Marbury, was the only area of growth in Charles County during the period. Between 1910 and 1920 the population nearly doubled from 1589 to 3,124. In 1920, a new census district was established in Marbury having a population of 1,392. (1)

Endnotes

(1) Carlisle, Rodney P. Powder and Propellants : Energetic Materials at Indian Head, Maryland, 1890-1990. Washington, D.C. : U.S. Navy, 1990

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-755

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 6.22

Acreage of historical setting 150

Quadrangle name Indian Head

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning

date 6/30/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

state MD zip code 20646

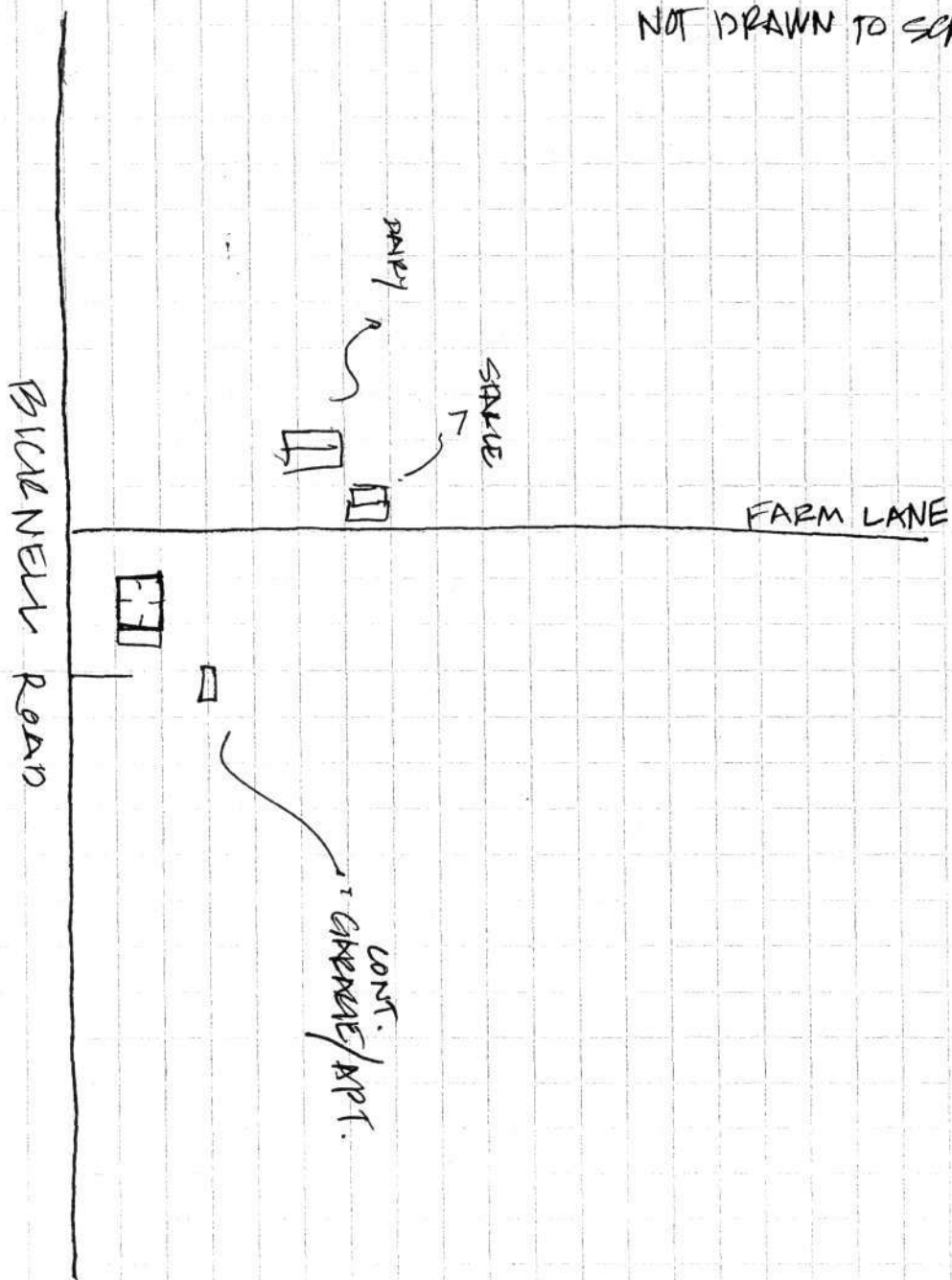
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

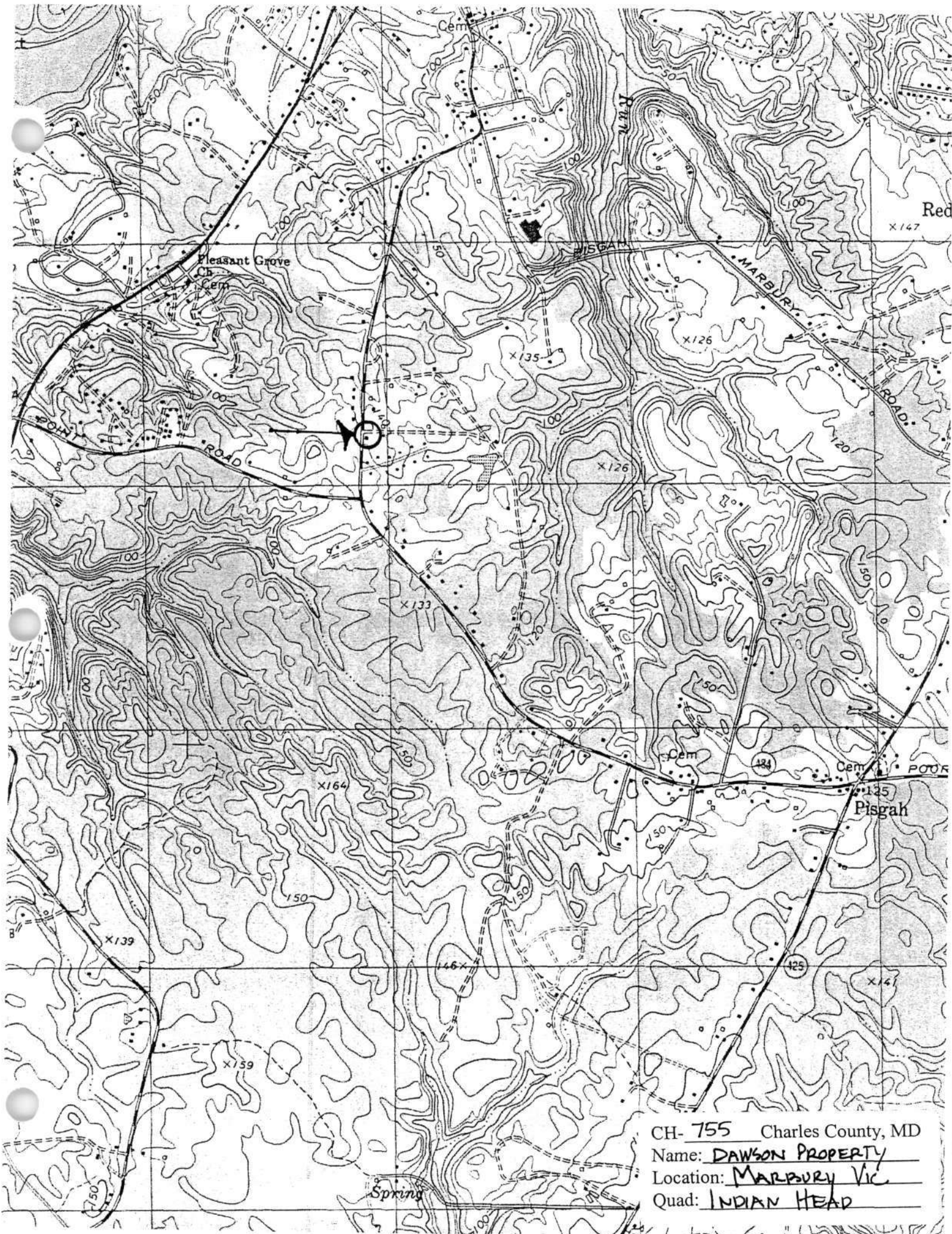
return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600



NOT DRAWN TO SCALE



CH-755 Charles County, MD
Name: DAWSON PROPERTY
Location: MARBURY VIL.
Quad: INDIAN HEAD



CH- 755 Charles County, MD
Name: DAWSON PROPERTY
Location: MARBURY VIC
Quad: INDIAN HEAD



CH-755

DAWSON Property

CHARLES Co., MD

C. HARDY

10/02

MD

SHPO



CH-755

~~DANKON~~ Property

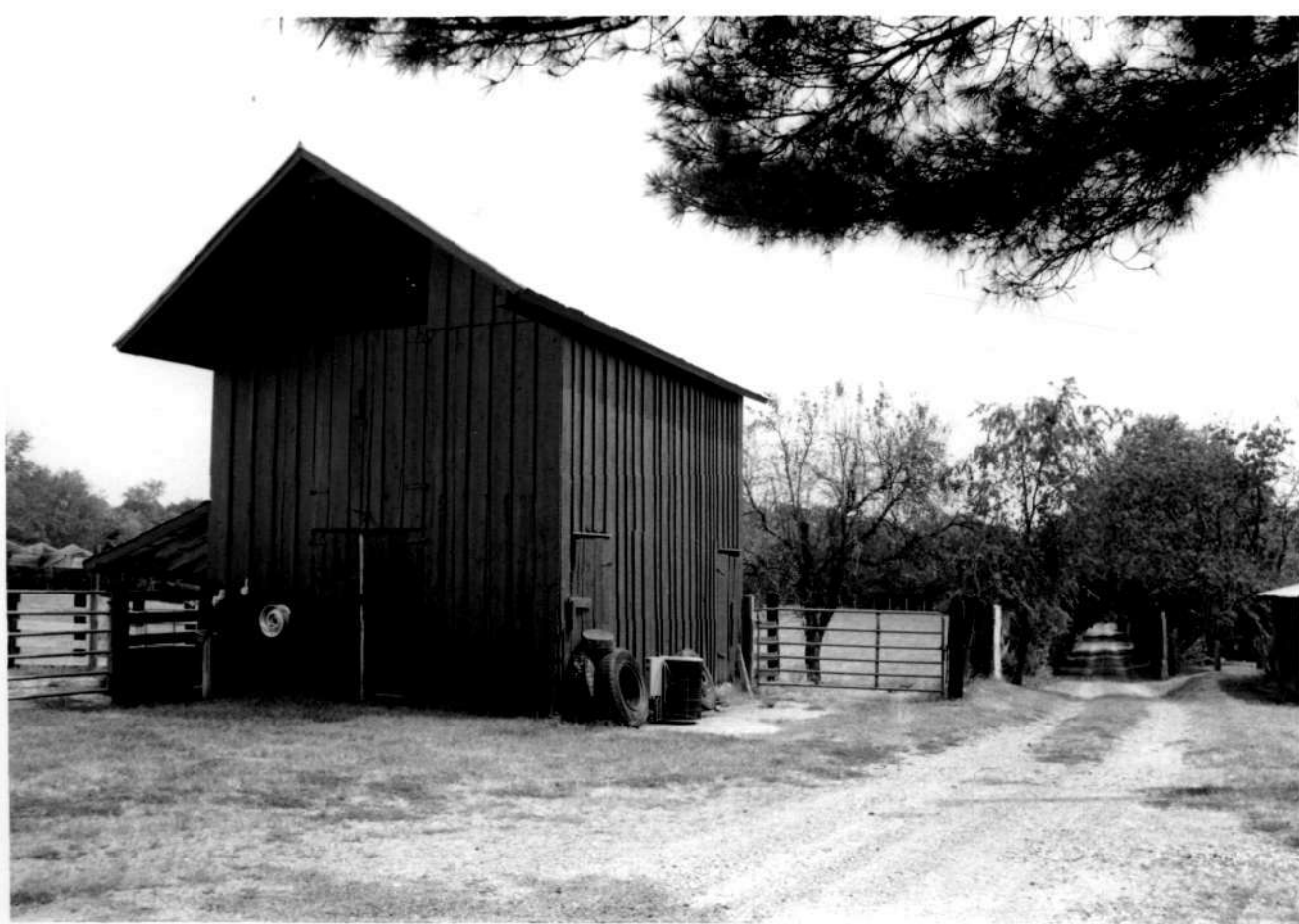
Charles Co., MD

C. Hardy

10/02

MD

SHPO



CA-755

~~DAWSON~~ Property

Charles Co. MD

C. Hardy

10/02

MD

SHPO